

Poetry Grades 6-8

2016 Human Rights Arts Competition – Tompkins County Office of Human Rights

First Place:

Choices, by Adina Wilensky (Lehman Alternative Community School)

Sometimes it seems as if I have to look one
way,
Or be one thing.
But I don't believe that.
I can be a model
And walk down the runway on my own
And look beautiful.
Or,
I can be a pilot
And land a place on the runway,
And control all the buttons and gears inside.
I can look any way I want to look and be
anything I want to be.
So can my friends.
So can all women.
So can all people.

Maybe I'll be a scientist
And explore the world of metals and liquids
and gas.
I can also be a doctor,
And heal the world one amazing person at a
time.

I can look any way I want to look and be
anything I want to be.
So can my friends.
So can all women.
So can all people.

I can be an artist
And decorate the world with my creations,
Inspiring women to take a leap of faith and
be themselves.
I can be a poet
And scar the Earth with my literature.

I can look any way I want to look and be
anything I want to be.
So can my friends.
So can all women.
So can all people.

I can be a singer
And wake up to sing the world a song every
morning,
Or sing to children to help cultivate their
imaginations.
Someday I could be an actor,
Speaking lines that truly mean something to
me.

I can look any way I want to look and be
anything I want to be.
So can my friends.
So can all women.
So can all people.

I can be a cook,
And make food for starving people.
And feed the hungry.
But most of all,
I can be myself.
And I can be whatever I want to be,
And look anyway I want to look.
I can be a creative human being,
A feminist,
A friend,
A child,
A daughter,
And a unique voice in this world of love.

Poetry Grades 6-8

2016 Human Rights Arts Competition – Tompkins County Office of Human Rights

Second Place:

Free Once More

Harmony Niemi (Boynton Middle School)

Waking up to yelling and screaming wondering will it stop
Knowing that when I go to eat I can't call the cops
I feel her eyes watching me ever so sharp day and night
I'll get hurt even when I'm trying to be polite
Now I go to get my education
Seven hours a day, it's like my mini vacation
Now coming home to poor mother, rushing us out the door
And I realize that her tolerance has hit the floor
We rush to the car and arrive at a strange place
I notice there are people of a different race
A year later we settled down into a small town
No more torment, no more pain, there's friendly folks all around
Mother is happy, peaceful she's done from being sore
Only then I knew we were free once more

Third Place:

Speak Up

Lincoln DeMichiei (Boynton Middle School)

Up before the summer sun
working on my picket signs
It's going to be a glorious day to exercise my right to say,
"Black lives matter."
Leaves crunch beneath my feet
as I educate my community
Door to door, face to face
In support of the human race
I exercise my right to say,
"Vote!"
No matter the season, no matter the reason
Exercise your right to say
Anything.

Poetry Grades 6-8

2016 Human Rights Arts Competition – Tompkins County Office of Human Rights

Honorable Mention:

A Right, Some Words

Nathan Greenwald Schuye (Boynton Middle School)

We have the right to be free from discrimination.
This world is full of it.
Sometimes unconsciously.
Or purposely.
We don't try to.
We hate it.
It's outlawed.
And it happens every day.
No rule no law can stop it.
So it's up to us.
A right, some words.
A movement, a reality.

Honorable Mention:

Rising to the Top

KaiMei Bentley (Boynton Middle School)

In The Depths Of Darkness, All Alone
No One Near
No Place To Call Home
There Is A Light Dim But Still There
Shining Through The Cloak Of Darkness That Shrouds All That Live There
Working All Day Working All Night,
Losing All Hope That One Day You'll Take Flight
Crying Out For Help, But Hope Depleting
That Someone Really Will Hear You Pleading
Slowing Sinking To Your Despair
Finding No Comfort In The Hope You Thought Was There
Feels Gone Forever
And Will Stay That Way
But Through The Fog And Shadows Of Night
Hope Takes Wing Like A Bird In Flight
Support Our Human Rights